

Disseminated by NSC
F 89-151, 6/27/89
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Fid 6/B
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August 31, 1961

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

to

The development of the international situation during recent weeks in Europe and elsewhere has considerably increased the tensions which led to the initial moves of our military build-up. In addition to the possible military requirements in support of our position on Berlin, we have engaged in planning for Southeast Asia which could result in the commitment of U.S. forces.

Our principal adversary, the USSR, is responding to the situation by halting the demobilization of several hundred thousand men, and by resuming nuclear testing. What should we do at this juncture?

As a first step, I should like to take another hard look at the progress of our military build-up, with particular reference to those measures which we originally decided to defer. For this purpose, I am asking the Secretary of State to call a meeting of the Steering Group next week. At this meeting, I would like to have you present your analysis of the military situation with recommendations as to any further expansion of our military forces in the light of the events of recent weeks.

/s/ John F. Kennedy

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